

Rector's Report 2023

There's an ancient prayer practice devised by St Ignatius of Loyola called the Daily Examen. It's a prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern God's direction for us.

In my report I will use the two questions that this prayer asks of us. For which moment am I most thankful? For which moment am I least thankful? But instead of focussing on a day I will take 2023 as a whole.

What am I least thankful for in 2023

Leaky roofs, broken windows and increased pressure on church finances. Times of illness and bereavement, those who have become housebound and therefore we see less of.

What am most I thankful for in 2023

I am thankful to the cake makers and coffee servers; cleaners, wardens, vergers, singer and musicians; Lay Pastoral Assistants, Licensed Lay Minister, Lay Worship Leaders, Lay Pioneers, retired Clergy, treasurers and secretaries; those who look after the vulnerable and visit the sick, who fundraise and give money to the church, those who fill in tedious forms, and organise repairs, repair things themselves. I'm thankful for those who cut the grass and mend the door, who prepare the altar, and check the leaky roof; who ring the bells and read the lessons and help us to pray. For those who gently remind the Rector when he's forgotten something. Thank you God for those who have joined our churches and those who have begun to explore the Christian faith. I am thankful for our church family, 6 churches but one in Christ. Mostly I am thankful to God who has held us, accompanied us and challenged us to make Christ visible through words and actions.

The Church of England is complicated, I feel the frustrations that many of you have and have expressed. I share many of them and as a simple village parson my focus remains on the local, leading us in mission, preaching, teaching and pastoral care. On a national church level we must call out injustice whilst also aiming to be gracious and forgiving whilst not always believing all that is reported in the press.

There are many unique pressures on small rural churches like ours, affording the current level of ministry is difficult and we are not alone in feeling this. However God has been and will be faithful, the God story is always one about generosity and not scarcity....however we are called to play our part, follow the way of Christ which is to be hopeful, loving and generous.

Friends we have a God who is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls (Hebrews 6:19).

Rev'd Lewis